Rep. Gonzalez center of move to restudy Kennedy assassination

By Jim Wood
Cailer Washington Correspondent

WASHINGTON — Rep. Henry B. Gonzalez, Democrat of San Antonio, finds himself the rally point for many of those who believe the conspiracy theory in the assassination of President Kennedy.

The Watergate hearings which brought out CIA connections of some of the convicted Watergate burglars have spurred new interest among conspiracy camp followers. Some still believe the CIA, right-wing extremists, and Cuban refugee loyalists were somehow connected with the assassination of John F. Kennedy in Dallas on Nov. 22, 1963.

The underground press and England's daily and weekly tabloids have picked up on the story again, all built around the continuing doubts of Gonzalez and his tentative idea to, at some point, ask Congress to review the investigation of the assassination.

The stories have produced substantial mail to Gonzalez, from Costa Mesa, Calif., to Indiana University to Washington to North Easton, Mass.

The letters urge him on, volunteer information or ask for some.

Gonzalez says he didn't put any credence in the theory of some that the CIA was involved in the Kennedy assassination until the revelations last year about CIA-connected persons involved in Watergate crimes.

For example, he says the Congressional Research Service has been unable to trace the activities of some of the original Watergate burglars between 1961-63. "My suspicions have been revived and fortified and I feel we should look into it," he says.

However, he qualifies this in letters to those who write him to point out that any renewed investigation would have to come from the Judiciary Committee, which is right in the middle of its impeachment inquiry.

He is not on the committee, he further points out, but adds he is gathering information in his spare time and hopes to present it someday, perhaps next year.

The new burst of interest developed after the National Tattler, a weekly tabloid, published a story last November about Gonzalez' doubts.

There followed stories in the Real Paper in Boston, Mass., an inquiry from the Unicorn News, a story in the London Evening Standard, an on-the-air telephone interview with Gonzalez' administrative assistant, Gail Beagle, by the Zodiac News Service in San Francisco and last week a banner story in the National Star, a new U.S. weekly.

The story has not been picked up yet by the American daily press although The Associated Press prepared one but didn't file it.

The mail Gonzalez is getting goes something like this:

—A woman from Alexandria, Va., still wonders why President Nixon was in Dallas on the morning of the assassination.

—A lawyer, also from Alexandria, who served in the foreign service from 1960-63, thinks "Watergate and Dallas are closely related."

—The Committee to Investigate Assassinations, headed by Washington lawyer Bernard Fensterwald Jr., offers its information and assistance. The committee, which meets annually to review the assassinations of Kennedy, his brother, Robert, and Martin Luther King, is persuaded the full truth has never come out.

—A man from Johnstown, Pa., claims he has information that two guns were used in the assassination of Robert F. Kennedy.

—A professor at Indiana University writes to say he is preparing a paper on the assassination. "A qualified researcher raises some terrible questions about involvement — using names which reach into the White House!"

And so on.

It is not surprising that Gonzalez is receptive to further inquiry. He was an admirer of Kennedy, and like him, he is a social issue liberal.

He was in a limousine about 100 yards behind Kennedy's at the time of the assassination.

Hanging on the wall in his office is a picture of Gonzalez and Kennedy, taken in Fort Worth the day before the ill-fated parade through Dallas.

5/1/74